

SENATE—Thursday, March 15, 2001

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable MIKE CRAPO, a Senator from the State of Idaho.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Today's prayer will be offered by our guest Chaplain, Rev. Alan Mitchell, Sligo Presbyterian Church, Republic of Ireland.

PRAYER

The guest Chaplain, Rev. Alan Mitchell, offered the following prayer:

O God, our Father, we acknowledge that the destiny of the nations and peoples of this world is in Your control.

We pray for all Senators and leaders elected to represent the interests and further the welfare of their constituents; especially we pray for the President, Mr. George W. Bush. May the leadership he gives this Nation and the nations of the Western World, be in accord with Your will and purpose.

We thank You for the commitment of the United States to peacemaking. Continue to inspire this administration as it seeks to create prosperity, equality, justice, freedom, and peace for people in this country and wherever the influence of this great Nation impacts on every continent.

On this weekend when we celebrate St. Patrick's mission in Ireland, may the message he proclaimed be proclaimed now with even greater fervor and passion, lighting fires of forgiveness and reconciliation, giving joy to Irish people within their own country and around the world.

Father, as we commence the business of this day, may Your Spirit, through our deliberations, accomplish Your purposes for this Nation as it fulfills its obligations to its own citizens and to people around the world who look to the United States for inspiration and example.

We offer these prayers through Jesus Christ. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable MIKE CRAPO led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore [Mr. THURMOND].

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, March 15, 2001.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable MIKE CRAPO, a Senator from the State of Idaho, to perform the duties of the Chair.

STROM THURMOND,
President pro tempore.

Mr. CRAPO thereupon assumed the chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

GUEST CHAPLAIN MITCHELL

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I join all of our colleagues in the Senate in welcoming and thanking our guest Chaplain today for the beautiful prayer he just delivered. He is Rev. Alan Mitchell. With that name, he could just as easily be from Sledge, MS, instead of Sligo, Ireland.

I love the accent he has but, more importantly, the beauty of his prayer. So many in America have roots back in Ireland, Scotland, and that area of the world. We feel a special kinship to the people in Ireland, and we wish them well and pray for them often as they seek greater economic opportunity and continued democracy and freedom. We are delighted to have Reverend Mitchell with us today.

SCHEDULE

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, the Senate will immediately resume consideration of the bankruptcy legislation with 10 hours remaining for postcloture debate. This morning, Senator WELLSTONE is here and ready to go, and he will be recognized to offer any of his germane amendments. Following the Wellstone debate, we will go to Senator KOHL who will be recognized to offer his homestead amendment, with up to 90 minutes of debate on that issue.

Under the previous order, there will be two votes at 12 noon on the Leahy amendments, Nos. 19 and 41. A vote is possible just prior to the vote scheduled at noon if time is yielded back with regard to the homestead amendment. Further amendments will be offered and debate will continue during today's session. Therefore, votes will occur throughout the day. The Senate will complete action on this bill as early as late this afternoon or tonight.

I, again, thank Senator WELLSTONE for his persistence and also his willingness to cooperate as we have gone along.

I was very pleased and impressed with the vote on cloture. I believe it was 80-19. It is clear the Senate wants to vote on this issue and wants to pass some needed bankruptcy reform.

I yield the floor.

Mr. REID. Before the leader leaves, it is my understanding—and the Presiding Officer can correct me if I am wrong—that in the 10 hours, which starts now, votes are counted, quorums are counted, so we will be here no later than 7:30, plus whatever time it takes to complete the votes. Is that right?

Mr. LOTT. That is correct. I hope that maybe it will not even be that late. It is possible we could get completed with our work a little earlier—6 or 6:30. That would be ideal. I believe, counting the votes and all of the time, it would not go beyond 7:30, so Senators should be aware of that. I might note, in terms of any other legislative action, certainly we wouldn't consider anything further without close consultation with the Democratic leader. We have the possibility of considering the SEC fees bill, but we want to do that in such a way it can be done either by voice vote or in wrap-up, or if there had to be votes, it would not occur until late on Monday afternoon. We will work through that. I put Senators on notice that we will at least consider how we will bring that bill up at some point.

I yield the floor.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

BANKRUPTCY REFORM ACT OF 2001

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will now resume consideration of S. 420, which the clerk will report.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 420) to amend title 11, United States Code, and for other purposes.

Pending:

Leahy amendment No. 20, to resolve an ambiguity relating to the definition of current monthly income.

Wellstone amendment No. 35, to clarify the duties of a debtor who is the plan administrator of an employee benefit plan.

Kennedy amendment No. 38, to allow for reasonable medical expenses.

Collins amendment No. 16, to provide family fishermen with the same kind of protections and terms as granted to family farmers under chapter 12 of the bankruptcy laws.